



Environmental Land Solutions, LLC
Environmental Analysis, Landscape Architecture & Planning

July 29, 2020

Environmental Protection Commission (EPC)
Town of Darien
2 Renshaw Road
Darien, CT 06820

Re: Environmental Assessment Report
Proposed Swimming Pool, 2572 Boston Post Road, Darien, CT

Dear Commission Members:

Environmental Land Solutions, LLC (ELS) has been retained by Rajat Gupta, the above referenced property owner, to prepare this Environmental Assessment narrative for a proposed rear yard swimming pool on the subject site. Portions of the site are within 100' of Holy Pond and a permit from the EPC is required. To complete this task, ELS staff has visited the site on May 31, 2019 and July 29, 2020 and reviewed site plans prepared by DiVesta Civil Engineering Associates, Inc.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The somewhat rectangular 43,062 sf (or 0.99 ± acres) site lies on the south side of Boston Post Road. Residential properties are found to the east and west of the site. The site is roughly 100' wide by 400' in length and generally gently sloping toward the south. The existing dwelling sits near the center of the site with maintained grounds (including areas of lawn, garden, and play area) to the north. To the south of the existing house are maintained grounds (including a patio and areas of lawn), upland woods along the western property line, and tidal wetlands to the southeast and south. An existing low rear yard retaining wall, located approximately 60' to the south of the house, separates the maintained grounds from tidal wetlands. Mean High Water is located about 60' to the south of the retaining wall. The upland woods, found along the western property boundary forming an upland peninsula, contain a lawn foot path.

Tidal Wetlands:

Tidal wetland areas, found to the south of the existing retaining wall, are mostly dominated by high marsh vegetation including Saltmeadow Cordgrass (*Spartina patens*), Spike Grass (*Distichlis spicata*), Black Grass (*Juncus gerardi*), Sea Lavender (*Limonium carolinianum*),

Switch Grass (*Panicum virgatum*), and High-tide Bush (*Iva frutescens*). Saltwater Cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) is found along the lower tidal areas to the south. A small stand of nonnative and invasive Japanese Knotweed grows along the waterward side of the retaining wall near the center of the site.

PROPOSED CONDITIONS

The property owner is proposing to install a 18'x32' in-ground swimming pool to the rear of the house within an existing lawn area. Construction access to the pool will be on the west side of the house. Five evergreen trees are proposed along the construction accessway along the western property line as replacement trees for the three to be removed. Erosion controls are proposed to prevent erosion and sedimentation off the site into regulated areas. The following activities are proposed within 100' of the Mean High Water of Holly Pond:

1. A new 18'x32' swimming pool and new patio are proposed within a lawn area that is adjacent to the existing patio. The edge of the raised narrow patio surrounding the pool is approximately 15' landward of the existing stone retaining wall that separates maintained land from tidal areas. The proposed cartridge type pool filter will have no back wash and be located on the east side of the house.
2. Underground drainage structures are proposed within the lawn area approximately 15' upslope of the retaining wall. The drainage system is designed for filter stormwater runoff for water quality purposes (see the drainage report for additional information).
3. A 5' wide by 50' long wetland buffer planting area, using mostly native herbaceous plantings, is proposed along the northern side of the retaining wall in an area currently maintained with lawn (see Wetland Buffer Planting Plan prepared by ELS, dated 7/29/20 for additional information). This new 250' sf planted buffer area will aid to improve the quality of stormwater runoff from the adjacent upslope lawn areas by trapping pollutants that are attached to sediments and removing pollutants by plant uptake.
4. The Wetland Buffer Planting Plan proposes that the small stand of Japanese Knotweed will be controlled, mainly by hand pulling.

WETLAND IMPACTS

The project proposes no direct work within wetland areas. The proposed site work will create 250 sf of new wetland buffer and control a small stand of nonnative Japanese Knotweed growing adjacent to tidal wetlands.

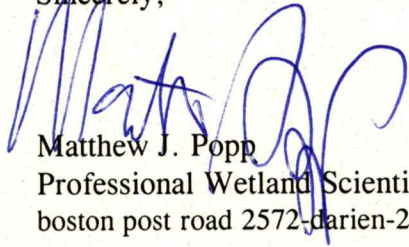
The environmental resources as described above will not be impacted by the proposed development primarily because 1) there will be no disturbance to tidal wetlands, 2) the

proposed pool is sited within an environmentally low-valued maintained lawn area, 3) 250 sf of wetland buffer will be enhanced with native plantings, 4) drainage structures are proposed for water quality purposes, and 5) nonnative and invasive Japanese Knotweed growing onsite along the tidal wetlands will be controlled.

SUMMARY

The proposed swimming pool is located within an existing maintained lawn area that is adjacent to an existing patio and located 13' \pm from the house structure. No direct impact to wetland areas is proposed and a 250 sf buffer area that is currently maintained as lawn will be enhanced with native plantings. The buffer plantings will aid to filter stormwater runoff and provide wildlife habitat. The proposed swimming pool is reasonable recreational use of the site for the property owner and his family and that no adverse environmental impacts are anticipated from the project.

Sincerely,



Matthew J. Popp
Professional Wetland Scientist / Landscape Architect
boston post road 2572-darien-2020 ea.wpd